



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

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News Release

USCIS PRIORITIZES BACKLOG ELIMINATION IN FY 2006 BUDGET

Washington, D.C.— U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) today requested \$1.854 billion in the FY 2006 budget, an overall increase of \$79 million, or 4 percent over the FY 2005 budget. The FY 2006 budget requests \$80 million in discretionary funding and \$1.774 billion in mandatory funding generated from fee revenues paid by persons seeking immigration benefits, including a total of \$100 million specifically for backlog elimination efforts.

“The President’s FY 2006 budget will allow us to build upon the progress we have made in the past year to restore integrity and public confidence in America’s legal immigration system. We have successfully reduced the backlog to 1.5 million cases, down from a high of 3.8 million cases in January 2004. USCIS is on track to realize the President’s goal of six-month processing times for all immigration benefit applications by the end of FY 2006,” said USCIS Director Eduardo Aguirre.

USCIS has set the agency’s priorities as (1) ensuring national security, (2) reducing the backlog, and (3) improving customer service. In the agency’s first two years, USCIS expanded electronic filing of applications and benefits to support 50 percent of the total volume; expanded the ability for customers to access case status information via the USCIS website; expanded InfoPass, the USCIS web-based system that enables the public to go online to schedule appointments; published for the first time a comprehensive handbook for new arrivals, “*A Guide to New Immigrants*,” issued more than 16,500 Certificates of Citizenship to internationally adopted children through streamlined processing; and created the Fraud Detection and National Security Unit to work closely with the appropriate law enforcement entities in responding to hits on aliens who pose a threat to national security or public safety.

Every business day, USCIS will: process 140,000 national security background checks; receive 100,000 web hits; take 80,000 calls at four National Customer Service Centers; process 30,000 applications for an immigration benefit; see 25,000 visitors at 92 offices; issue 20,000 green cards; capture 8,000 sets of fingerprints at 130 Application Support Centers; welcome 3,000 newly naturalized citizens; greet almost 200 refugees; and help American parents adopt 100 foreign orphans.

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On March 1, 2003, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services became one of three legacy INS components to join the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. USCIS is charged with fundamentally transforming and improving the delivery of immigration and citizenship services, while enhancing our nation's security.